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Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.28

Twenty-fourth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.28, as orally revised (A/C.5/58/28).

2. Under the terms of the draft resolution, as orally revised, the General Assembly would decide that the activities under the mandate of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict should be supported through regular budget funding. The Office of the Special Representative has been financed entirely by voluntary contributions since its inception. As at the end of November 2003, the balance of extrabudgetary resources available for the Office amounted to $2,123,000, which the Secretary-General estimates could allow the financing of the operations of the Office approximately through July 2004 (ibid., paras. 7 and 8).

3. The Advisory Committee notes that the statement of programme budget implications submitted to the Third Committee (A/C.3/58/L.84), which is mentioned in paragraph 1 of the statement by the Secretary-General, does not in fact contain information on requirements for possible estimates of expenditure arising from the draft resolution. Rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly states that "no resolution involving expenditure shall be recommended by a committee for approval by the General Assembly unless it is accompanied by an estimate of expenditures prepared by the Secretary-General".

4. In this connection, the Advisory Committee takes note of paragraph 10 of the statement by the Secretary-General, which indicates that, based on the actual

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number and level of the staff of the Office for the last three years and on the related pattern of non-post expenditures, it is estimated that the requirements for the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict to continue the same scope and nature of programme of activities as at present would amount to $6,053,700 for the biennium 2004-2005. The Committee does not consider this information a statement of programme budget implications in accordance with the requirements of rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. A breakdown of estimated requirements should be provided to the Fifth Committee for its consideration of the matter.

5. In his statement, the Secretary-General recalls that in section V of its resolution 57/190 of 18 December 2002, the General Assembly requested him to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the scope and effectiveness of the United Nations system response to the issue of children affected by armed conflict, including recommendations for strengthening, mainstreaming, integrating and sustaining these activities, and to submit his report to the Assembly for its consideration at its fifty-eighth session (A/C.5/58/28, para. 11). The statement by the Secretary-General indicates that it is anticipated that the report will be submitted in the spring of 2004 and that it may have an impact on the programme of work and mode of operation of the Office (ibid.). Given the balance of extrabudgetary funds available to the Office, as noted in paragraph 2 above, the Secretary-General therefore proposes that the issue of regular budget funding emanating from draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.28 be considered by the Assembly in the context of its deliberations on the forthcoming report in the spring of 2004 (ibid., para. 13).

6. **In any case, whether or not the activities under the mandate of the Special Representative should be funded under the regular budget is a policy decision to be made by the General Assembly. Should the decision be taken to do so, the General Assembly will also have to decide whether to address the question of resource requirements now or at its resumed fifty-eighth session, in the spring of 2004, in the context of its consideration of the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General in pursuance of section V of Assembly resolution 57/190.**